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Official Records

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New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 48 and 114 (continued)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/701)

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, the European Union would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting to consider the Secretary-General's report on human security (A/64/701) under agenda items 48 and 114.

The European Union welcomes the Secretary-General's report, which provides a comprehensive update on developments related to human security since the adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). In this regard, it is worth recalling

that in 2005, the heads of State and Government agreed to discuss the notion of human security within the framework of the General Assembly and that, in the informal debate that took place on 22 May 2008, it was already apparent that there was a growing interest in the concept. The European Union believes that human security should be a means for people to holistically address the multidimensional challenges we face today. Above all, human security represents a new way of thinking that requires reflection on how to respond, together and efficiently, to the great challenges that confront humankind.

I wish to recall the oft-repeated phrase that there is no development without security and no security without development, and that neither security nor development can exist without respect for human rights. In that regard, human security means the right to a decent life, based on a series of factors that the European Union believes should be examined in detail and from a holistic perspective.

First, combating poverty can contribute to both human security and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. That is why the European Union stresses that the Treaty of Lisbon precisely enshrines the fight against poverty as one of the leading inspirations for its international action.

Second, post-conflict situations are defined by the fragility of peace processes. Thus, the international community must strengthen its efforts to promote the protection of civilians in conflict situations. The European Union believes that the Peacebuilding

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Commission has a key role to play as an inclusive and flexible intergovernmental platform aimed at bringing cohesion to the political, security, development and humanitarian aspects of such situations.

Third, with regard to mines and other unexploded ordnance, the European Union would also like to express its concern about the humanitarian and development challenges caused by the presence of mines and other unexploded ordnance that continue to hinder the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes, as well as humanitarian assistance operations.

Fourth, much more needs to be done in the area of prevention and mediation. That is why the European Union is redoubling its efforts to work in partnership with the United Nations and other organizations, in particular regional organizations and especially the African Union, to promote support for mediation efforts whenever possible.

Fifth, with regard to the situation of children in armed conflict, the European Union remains deeply concerned about the protection of children from the effects of violence and highlights the need to address the short- and long-term impacts of armed conflict on children. In this context, the European Union wishes to highlight the important work undertaken by the Security Council and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Ms. Coomaraswamy.

Sixth, with regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women, the European Union stresses the importance of the commitments made pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009). Those commitments should be transformed into concrete action through the adoption of clear indicators. In this context, the appointment of Ms. Wallström as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict was an important step. We believe that gender considerations should always be included in peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies. The European Union therefore believes that the future gender entity should play a crucial role in promoting gender equality and empowering women throughout the world.

Seventh, the responsibility to protect is an aspect of human security that is also addressed in the report of the Secretary-General. The European Union strongly

supports implementing the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In that regard, we believe that the concepts of human security and the responsibility to protect are mutually reinforcing.

Eighth and last, I would like to refer to climate change. There is growing concern about the adverse effects of climate change throughout the planet. In order to address the challenge posed by climate change, the European Union has adopted a strategy that includes implications at the regional level. I should like once again to reiterate that the European Union believes that we should continue to build on the Copenhagen Accord and not forget that the adverse effects of climate change are a priority, especially in the most vulnerable developing countries and, in particular, in least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as in the African continent in general.

The European Union attaches great importance to the recommendation of the Secretary-General that we take into account the added value of the concept of human security and the need to continue to hone the concept so that it may be incorporated into all United Nations activities. In conclusion, the European Union therefore supports the Secretary-General's vision that the implementation of the concept of human security does not in itself mean any additional work for the Organization, but that it complements and focuses the activities of the United Nations in a broad spectrum of areas — always predicated on the goal of achieving the rights of all people to a dignified life.

Ms. Moses (Nauru): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific island developing States represented at the United Nations: the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu and my own country, Nauru. We associate ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Australia on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on human security (A/64/701). Human security can be broadly defined as the freedom from fear and the freedom from want, as well as the opportunity of individuals to enjoy their rights and fully develop their human potential.

But who is responsible for human security? The report states that it is primarily Governments. However, it rightly acknowledges that, in today's interconnected world, many threats to human security cannot be overcome by one nation acting alone. That is clearly the case for the small island developing States (SIDS) of the Pacific. To a large extent, our security lies in the hands of others.

We did not create the financial crisis, but our islands have suffered greatly in the subsequent economic downturn. We have little impact on the volatility of global food and energy prices. Yet, years after prices fell in most countries, prices in the Pacific have remained at historically high levels. The greatest threat to the human security of our people is climate change. Even now, we are fighting a losing battle against the dangerous impacts of climate change, which are rapidly eroding our food security, water security and public health.

It is important to remember that these are all man-made disasters for which the Pacific SIDS bear almost no responsibility. Nor do our small countries have the resources necessary to mitigate the damage caused by these and other global crises. Therefore, we have no choice but to rely on multilateral institutions and the international community for help in preserving some measure of human security for our people. However, those sources of assistance are failing us. Progress in the Pacific towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals has stalled, and the emissions-reduction pledges currently on the table fall far short of what is necessary to prevent catastrophic climate change.

Human security is not a new concept. It is one of the foundational principles behind the modern social welfare State, the institutions of which have alleviated poverty, improved health and education, and protected people from the vagaries of human life throughout the developed world. However, those same countries have established systems and engaged in activities that have failed to improve, and have often undermined, human security in many developing countries.

A central question remains: How can the concept of human security be used to achieve the reality of human security in the developing world? The Secretary-General's report proposes using human security as an analytical framework for formulating comprehensive solutions to complex and cross-cutting

problems. That proposal has merit, as the framework is versatile and can be used to analyze a broad range of problems. However, we must avoid some pitfalls.

First, the concept of human security should not be used to erode established human rights and fundamental freedoms, or a State's responsibility to protect those rights. Protecting those rights must remain a central focus of the international community.

Secondly, the concept of human security must be used to augment existing international initiatives rather than to trigger a proliferation of new ones. The 10-year review of the Millennium Development Goals and the five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States will take place in September. Those initiatives are vital to our sustainable development. The concept of human security should be used to facilitate the success of those initiatives and not to siphon vital resources from them. We must also always strive to address the root causes of a problem. A multifaceted response is not necessarily an effective one.

For example, the Secretary-General's report places climate change in the broader context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. It also highlights the importance of improving disaster planning, promoting community-based adaptation and mitigation plans, and accelerating the transfer of information and technology. Those actions are valuable and should all be pursued with vigour. But let me be clear — no amount of development will save our islands from disappearing if the Earth continues to warm and sea levels continue to rise.

We must not obscure responsibility. We must not blame the victim. Climate change is a problem not because vulnerable countries are insufficiently resilient. Climate change is a problem because the major emitting countries have failed to adequately reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Without question, climate change has profound implications for human security in vulnerable countries. It stretches the capacity of our institutions and undermines our prospects for sustainable development. However, the threat that climate change poses to the Pacific SIDS is far worse because climate change threatens the very survival of our islands.

For that reason, the Pacific SIDS introduced and this body unanimously adopted resolution 63/281 on climate change and its possible security implications. Pursuant to the resolution, the Secretary-General released a report (A/64/350) that clearly identified multiple pathways by which climate change threatens international peace and security. The report was a welcome contribution to this urgent discussion.

Now, the time has come for the Security Council to act upon the General Assembly resolution and to begin considering ways that it can address such grave security threats. Today, the Pacific SIDS sent letters to all Security Council members, urging them to support our call for immediate action. The Security Council holds primary responsibility under the United Nations Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has a legal duty to use the expansive powers granted to it to address the security threats posed by climate change.

If fostering human security is indeed a priority of the international community, it must start by addressing the root causes of our insecurity. Only then will people in the Pacific have a chance to live life free from want and fear.

Mr. Goledzinowski (Australia): Australia is privileged to deliver this statement today on behalf of the countries of the Pacific Islands Forum as the current Chair of the group, but first I would like to acknowledge the powerful statement just delivered by Ambassador Moses on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States.

We note the Secretary-General's report (A/64/701) and would like to thank him for his work as part of the broader effort to apply the concept of human security to the work of the United Nations. The barriers to human security across the globe are diverse and complex. We can disagree — and no doubt we will — about how different types of security challenges relate to one another, both in the real world and here at the United Nations. However, focusing on a group such as the Pacific Islands Forum tends to strip away much of that complexity.

When we look at the Pacific family, particularly its smallest members, we see with awful clarity what the term human security actually means. Small island communities are grappling with the simultaneous threat of sea-level rise, extreme weather events, the decline in viable fisheries and changes to traditional patterns of

subsistence agriculture, with the consequent pressures on inter-communal relations. For those communities, the interconnectedness of security threats needs no explanation. To put the vulnerability of small island States into context, when Cyclone Heta hit Niue in 2004, it damaged 90 per cent of housing and wreaked destruction estimated at more than five times the country's gross domestic product, or the equivalent of 200 years' worth of exports.

Most of us can only begin to guess what sort of pressure that puts on societal institutions. Even in Australia, it is the indigenous people of the Torres Strait Islands, a group of low-lying islands to the North of the continent, that will be most affected in their enjoyment of the human rights to housing, water, food and health, as well as their cultural right to land.

As the Ambassador of Spain noted earlier, speaking on behalf of the European Union, development, human rights and freedom from conflict are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. To achieve such conditions, individuals in developing States need to have their voices heard, most importantly in their own countries, but also here at the United Nations.

That was one of the messages of the recent Small Island Developing States Day, which was marked during the eighteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The effective review of the Mauritius Strategy will be one way to ensure that those voices are heard.

As Ambassador Moses also reminded us, we must not forget that climate change poses an existential threat to many Pacific islands. The voices of the most vulnerable were also heard here nearly one year ago when, on 3 June 2009, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 63/281, entitled "Climate change and its possible security implications". Although the resolution focused on the threat of climate change to international peace and security, the issue has a clear human dimension as well.

We have come a long way in that one year, and this debate is evidence of that. However, we need further discussion on the definition of human security and how to address the root causes of human insecurity. We have to go further to ensure the security of all peoples, especially those of the small island States, who experience unique vulnerabilities to

security threats that can be abated only by collective international effort.

Mr. Hernández-Milian (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for Costa Rica to speak today in its capacity as Chair of the Human Security Network (HSN) on behalf of the following members: Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Switzerland, Thailand and Slovenia, as well as South Africa in its capacity as observer. We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this formal meeting and for organizing this morning's constructive panel discussion on "People-centred approaches: the added value of human security". We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for submitting his report on human security (A/64/701) and for its references to the work of the Human Security Network.

The new, multiple, complex and interrelated threats and vulnerabilities that compromise our survival, well-being, livelihoods and dignity have become increasingly transnational and require us to act collectively to address them effectively. The impact of the global financial and economic crisis, rising food prices, climate-related emergencies, protracted conflicts, transnational crime and health concerns have had multidimensional effects that, in some cases, have exceeded or reduced the capacity of our individual Governments to respond on their own.

Today's new insecurities and vulnerabilities are global and interdependent, may involve multiple actors, transcend military solutions and require increased cooperation. In our view, the indivisibility among peace, security, development and human rights necessarily calls for an integrated conceptual approach to security in three interdependent aspects — human, national and international security — whereby a shortfall in any one of those dimensions will affect the others.

However, it is also important to clarify that human security does not entail the use of force or an expansion of the conventional concept of security. In our view, the basic principle of the concept is that people should be at the centre of our efforts, not only as passive objects of protection, but also through their active empowerment. Human security is the cornerstone that connects and complements the goals of ensuring national and international security with the

security and well-being of our communities and of individuals, in particular the more vulnerable.

Human security has become a useful operational tool in assisting Governments to identify critical and pervasive threats to the welfare and stability of their people. The human security perspective can help Governments to design and implement policies and strategies against emerging threats beyond State concerns surrounding military security. It is people-centred, context-specific and holistic approach provides significant opportunities to address the root causes of conflicts, combat poverty and inequality and build more secure and sustainable environments based on the participation and engagement of all sectors of society.

It is particularly relevant to emphasize as well the importance of international cooperation and multilateralism. The implementation and mainstreaming of the concept of human security require multi-stakeholder responses through the establishment of partnerships and synergies. As highlighted in the report, the concept of human security has been further refined and promoted by various international initiatives and reports both within and outside the United Nations system, such as the work of the Commission on Human Security, the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, the Friends of Human Security and our Human Security Network. In addition, several regional and subregional organizations have played a very important role in this regard.

Over the past 10 years, our Network has considered a broad spectrum of common global challenges, ranging from conflict to post-conflict issues, such as anti-personnel mines; small arms and light weapons; the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including women and children; transitional justice and peacebuilding. Fully aware that human security is not limited to the absence of conflict, but is linked above all to the creation of social, cultural, economic and environmental conditions to prevent conflicts while at the same time ensuring the survival, well-being, livelihood and dignity of all human beings. We have also included on our agenda important issues related to HIV and AIDS and health concerns in general, environment, poverty alleviation, climate change and human rights.

The Human Security Network strongly believes in the added value of the concept of human security. We can look to the experiences of many States that have already applied the human security concept in their national policies to understand the real value of the concept. We also believe that mainstreaming this practical approach into the relevant activities of the United Nations system will promote a greater sense of local ownership and strengthen healthy State-society relations. The real aspiration of human security is to satisfy simultaneously our global and national security concerns with the concrete needs of our populations. This approach will reveal mismatches among domestic, regional and international policies and help to identify priority necessities. Subsequently, short-, medium- and long-term strategies should be developed based on the actual needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of the affected communities.

Finally, the members of the HSN wish to register our support for the initiative to present a draft resolution of the General Assembly on human security. Mindful of the different perspectives around this concept, we would like to focus on its practical added value as a people-centred, context-specific and holistic approach to interrelated threats and vulnerabilities while acknowledging the various international, regional and sub regional initiatives. Our preference would be a concise procedural draft resolution that reaffirms paragraph 143 of the World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) and takes note of the report of the Secretary-General in order to enable further consideration of issues related to human security at the sixty-sixth session and receive a new progress report on the topic.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): As co-Chair of the Friends of Human Security, Mexico welcomes the convening of this meeting, which will contribute to broadening the dialogue and reflection begun some years ago by the international community on the importance of human security. The efforts undertaken by various initiatives, such as the Commission on Human Security, the Friends of Human Security and the Human Security Network, have led to greater understanding of the paradigm of State security and thus of peace, international security and development.

The interdependent and transnational character of traditional and new threats has compelled States to adopt measures based on a people-centred human

security that guarantees State control over security policies for confronting such threats and ensures that these policies do not have a negative impact on or implications for their communities. This is a major but not impossible challenge to meet.

In this context, we must integrate the human security approach into the social dimension of security policies that complement poverty and hunger reduction strategies, mitigate the vulnerability of certain sectors of the population, and reduce disaster risks and the impact of pandemics both in situations that are free of violence and in situations of armed conflict. The natural aspirations of our peoples to prosperity and security require our public policies to include the human security approach.

Efforts to integrate human security into the priorities of the United Nations and its Members have been many and progressive. Mexico therefore welcomes the submission of the Secretary-General's report on human security (A/64/701), which contributes to greater understanding of the issue, defines its scope and offers guidelines for its application. The report provides a timely focus that, on the one hand, prepares the way for placing people at the centre of decision-making and the adoption of public policies and, on the other, provides a prospective multidimensional overview of the implementation of a human security approach that prioritizes early warning systems and the mitigation of recurrent crisis situations.

Mexico also welcomes the report's contribution to alleviating the tension between human security and human rights, as it stresses the complementary nature of both. Human security is not a legal regime per se and therefore does not generate new obligations or replace existing regimes based on the protection of persons. On the contrary, because of its complementary nature, human security contributes to the rule of law because it involves recognition that respect for and the application of a legal architecture based on transparency and accountability create conditions favourable to the individual. In addition, and for that reason, it is important to stress that at any moment human security can be considered to be the equivalent of the responsibility to protect. Both concepts follow a specific logic that gives human security a fundamentally preventive character.

Mexico believes that human security does not involve new duties or obligations for the United Nations, but that it helps to focus its activities in the related fields of security, development and human rights. The list of issues to which human security brings added value is very long. Some of those issues — hunger, the economic crisis and its various side effects, and climate change, just to mention a few — are widely known to those of us here in all their magnitude and gravity because they undermine the right of people to live free from fear and poverty.

This list is not an exhaustive one. We therefore believe it timely to call on the United Nations to continue to integrate the human security approach into the various fields within its competence, such as the mandates of peace missions, peacebuilding processes, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, arms trade control, emergency reconstruction, the systematic violation of human rights, humanitarian crises, food and health insecurity and environmental damage. We also believe that our Organization, through its agencies and programmes, should continue analyzing human security with the mechanisms already at its disposals to that end, such as the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council, to give but one example.

If human security has anything to offer, it is its multidimensional, comprehensive and progressive nature, which represents a qualitative leap in the way we conceive of the human individual, who is at the centre of this debate, and the decision-making process concerning political stability and State security. Mexico hopes that human security will become a pillar in the decision-making of States and United Nations through which we enhance the capacity of individuals and mitigate the lacunas that cause the most damage.

My delegation supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General and, as co-Chair of the Friends of Human Security, invites Members States and the United Nations system to pursue this broadened dialogue in all existing mechanisms in order to reach the necessary consensus within our Organization.

Mr. Edrees (Egypt): I would like at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for introducing earlier today his report on human security (A/64/701), which will undoubtedly assist Member States in fulfilling the commitment they made in the 2005 World Summit

Outcome (resolution 60/1) to discuss and define human security in the General Assembly. The report represents an important contribution, which I am sure will facilitate the discussion, as no agreement exists thus far on the definition or the scope of the term “human security” among the general membership.

I would also like to express appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening this important plenary meeting to consider the report, and for his initiative to organize a panel discussion in the morning on the critical issue of the added value of human security.

Egypt has closely followed the discussion on human security since 1994. We took part in formulating paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome and observed the evolution of its implementation within the Human Security Network and the Friends of Human Security. We welcome the role played by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security in the implementation of various important projects. We commend in particular the role that Japan has played since its announcement in 1997 that human security would be one of its foreign policy pillars, both in support of the Trust Fund and in encouraging, along with Mexico and others, the deliberations on this important issue today.

Egypt believes that the discussion and definition of human security should continue in the General Assembly, based on the international commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter, in addition to which come the principles of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States. It should also be based on the principles of international humanitarian law, with due respect for the right to self-determination for peoples under foreign occupation.

The General Assembly recognized in 2005, at the level of the heads of State and Government, that all individuals, in particular those in vulnerable situations, are entitled to freedom from fear, freedom from want, and equal opportunity to enjoy all of their rights and fully develop their human potential. In Egypt's view, people are not inherently vulnerable, but become so due to the socio-economic contexts in which they find themselves. That is particularly true of women, children, migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons, asylum-seekers, persons belonging to

national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, indigenous peoples, persons deprived of their liberty and peoples under foreign occupation.

While we support the noble objectives of achieving human security for those people who find themselves in vulnerable situations, we believe that international peace and security are attainable only through eliminating inequalities and injustices and fostering common grounds for mutual understanding. It is therefore essential that the discussion on human security be centred on development alongside the promotion of respect for human rights. That is the exact nature of the projects under way, which are reflected in the letter by the Ambassadors of Japan and Mexico contained in document A/62/695.

Special attention should be given in this regard to the needs of countries undergoing or emerging from conflicts so as to prevent relapse into conflict and ensure that humanitarian assistance is accessible and that policies seeking to enforce economic blockades, deprivation and collective punishment are excluded, in full respect of the commitment made by all States under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants which provide that, under no circumstances, may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

If we are to deal with human security within the United Nations system in an effective manner, we should commit ourselves to adopting a cooperative approach to the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms through international support for national capacity-building efforts in order to enable Governments to meet their national obligations, particularly within the context of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism of the Human Rights Council, supported by such regional review mechanisms as the African Peer Review Mechanism. We should also commit ourselves to supporting the activities of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the field of comprehensive human development, with special attention to health, education and the advancement and protection of women and children.

Meanwhile, we should work together to strengthen regional capacities to deal with emerging issues such as natural and environmental disasters, and those that are human-made, such as climate change, nuclear disasters and their connection to the acquisition

of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as their continued existence and stockpiling represent a perilous threat to the survival of mankind. In addition, we should tackle with more determination the issues of landmines, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and their correlation with drug trafficking and the illicit trade in, and exploitation of, natural resources and with the fuelling of armed conflicts.

In doing so, we need to agree on a comprehensive, multidimensional and integrated approach in order to overcome the negative repercussions of ongoing international crises, be they related to food security, environmental security, energy security, combating hatred and incitement, terrorism and human trafficking. This approach needs to be devised in such a way that would also enable us to effectively respond to emerging challenges that impede the realization of the potentials and aspirations of individuals and peoples for progress and prosperity, thus bolstering the ability of developing countries to achieve their development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Our endeavours to define and monitor the operationalization of the concept of human security should remain under the umbrella of the General Assembly, in the hope that they will create a driving force to restore confidence between the North and the South. We should be careful not to allow the use of the concept of human Security to be a back door to introduce or implement controversial concepts, or to justify intervention in domestic affairs, particularly between Governments and their peoples. National Governments have the primary responsibility to provide human security to their citizens. The responsibility of the international community is to complement that role and to provide the necessary support, upon the request and with the consent of national Governments, through building their capacities in order to meet the immediate and impending challenges and threats.

To enable Governments to perform their sovereign role, an effective partnership needs to be established among Governments, regional and international organizations, financial institutions and civil society, based on the principle of national ownership.

Human security needs to become an area that unites efforts, not a cause for conflict of interests, an area of convergence, not divergence.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report on human security, contained in document A/64/701. The report is a very good compilation of various aspects of human security, which first emerged as a concept in the *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1994. We see it still as an emerging concept. Different countries see the concept through different lenses. Likewise, we also have our own interpretation of the concept.

The definition containing the notion of freedom from want and freedom from fear, which was also reiterated in paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), as well as the definition of the independent Commission on Human Security of 2001, may provide good guidelines. We would like to consider the human security concept as one related to the development agenda. In our part of the world, and in many least developed countries, a lost crop resulting from a flood or a cyclone or a drought might be the single largest threat to human security. If there is no food to eat, the freedom to live in dignity is a distant aspiration.

Mr. Grauls (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Freedom from want covers economic security, food security, health security and environmental security; these are all so interlinked that it does not allow the entire concept to be confined to any particular area. A comprehensive and holistic approach is needed.

In a survey conducted in Bangladesh a couple of years ago, respondents identified poverty and unemployment as the biggest problem. Needless to say, that is what economic security is all about. In that survey, the elements of insecurity which may be classified as freedom from fear — such as crime, extortion and the availability of firearms — came far down the list. When asked what makes people feel most insecure, more than half of the respondents identified natural disaster; almost the same proportion of respondents identified lack of health care as a source of insecurity.

States definitely have the primary responsibility to protect their population from pervasive threats. But, at times, they might find themselves a position where they cannot tackle them single-handedly. And that is where the international community might come in, as an aid to the Government. In that way, a country may get out of dire straits. But there are certain issues that have to be dealt with having a long-term perspective in mind.

In Bangladesh, we face a great threat posed by climate change, although we have made a minimal contribution to the factors that cause it. Floods and cyclones have become common phenomena in Bangladesh. As a lower riparian country, we were used to these, but the sudden increase in the frequency and ferocity of such disasters menaces all our development efforts and shakes our resolve. We have to reallocate our development funds to humanitarian efforts. In a study, it was found that Bangladesh loses about 10,000 hectares of land each year due to river erosion. As a result, hundreds of thousands of people are displaced, who eventually head towards the major cities, in particular the capital. Remember: we are one of the world's most densely populated countries, with over 1,200 people per square kilometre — 40 times the density of the United States.

The exercise of internal migration poses a serious threat to the already overpopulated cities. The high degree of vulnerability in the face of possible sea-level rise might ultimately lead to the displacement of millions of people living in the coastal areas of densely populated Bangladesh.

All these must be seen from a human security perspective. To date, unfortunately, the international community has been unable to come up with an agreement or convention identifying ways to rehabilitate such people: those who are displaced owing to climate change and natural disasters.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that we have to go to the root causes that result in the pervasive threats and try to address them first. Unless we include all these issues, this debate may not be of much help to the millions who are suffering from a dearth of human security.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): Slovenia fully aligns itself with the statements delivered earlier by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European

Union and by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Human Security Network.

At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important debate on human security and for organizing the panel discussion, which provide excellent and timely opportunities to continue our discussions on the human security concept. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement this morning and for submitting his first report on human security to the General Assembly for its consideration (A/64/701).

The report provides a comprehensive overview of developments related to the advancement of human security since the 2005 World Summit, at which heads of State and Government recognized that all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential.

The main feature of human security is a people-centred approach and the security of the individual. Among other things, the report of the Secretary-General outlines how multiple, complex and highly interrelated threats affect the lives of millions of men, women and children around the world. Natural disasters, violent conflicts and their impact on civilians, climate change and the food, health, financial and economic crises take on transnational dimensions that transcend traditional notions of security. Human security involves comprehensive approaches that bring together security, development and human rights. In addressing the risks and root causes of insecurity, human security is prevention-oriented and focuses on the protection and empowerment of people.

Slovenia attaches great importance to the concept of human security. Slovenia has been a member of the Human Security Network since its establishment in 1996, and is a member of the Friends of Human Security. Slovenia also contributes to the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, which plays an important role in translating the concept of human security into concrete activities.

Slovenia has upheld its commitments to promoting human security in areas such as demining, the protection of civilians, including children and women in armed conflict, climate change, human rights education, human trafficking and others. Let me take this opportunity to highlight some of our activities.

Humanitarian and development challenges caused by the presence of landmines and other unexploded ordnance are at the core of our efforts to promote human security. They have serious and lasting social and economic consequences for the populations of mine-affected countries. The international community should therefore pay special attention to these remnants of warfare and commit to eliminating them.

Slovenia has been very active in the area of mine action, especially through the efforts of the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance, which was established by the Slovenian Government in 1998. A successful regional approach in South-Eastern Europe has encouraged further engagement. The Fund has expanded its activities to other areas of the world, including the Caucasus, the Middle East and Central Asia.

Another focus of our endeavours is the protection of civilians. Seventy per cent of the casualties in recent conflicts have been non-combatants, most of them women and children. In October 2010, we will mark the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security. That will be a good opportunity not only to exchange information about best practices and lessons learned, but also to enhance the role of women in all aspects of security, conflict management and peacekeeping operations. Slovenia will mark that important anniversary with its national action plan on resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), which is currently under preparation. Slovenia will also prepare a national action plan on resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005), which address the issue of children and armed conflict.

Climate-change issues and their security-related aspects have gained importance over the past few years. Climate change exacerbates poverty, diminishes available freshwater resources and threatens food security. Furthermore, when meteorological events such as floods and storms occur more frequently, they threaten human life and property worldwide. Adaptation to climate change includes capacity-building and improving crisis management. Slovenia is active in the area of disaster-risk reduction and management and hosts the Drought Management Centre for Southeastern Europe.

In conclusion, there is growing acceptance of the concept of human security and its added value. The

concept has been reflected in the work and decisions of many regional and subregional organizations, as well as at the national level. It can also contribute importantly to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Secretary-General emphasized in his statement that human security does not bring additional layers to the work of the United Nations. Rather, it provides the Organization with a framework to capitalize on our comparative advantages, bolster our actions, galvanize our work and revitalize our partnerships. It is for that reason that Slovenia supports further discussion and the inclusion of human security on the agenda of the General Assembly. We look forward to future reports of the Secretary-General on progress in mainstreaming human security into United Nations activities.

Mr. Cabactulan (Philippines): Allow me to express the appreciation of the Philippines for the convening of this series of General Assembly meetings to enable us to discuss and further define the notion of human security. Indeed, as an active friend of human security, the Philippines welcomes every opportunity to seek clarity for those who need more information in order for us to take the next steps beyond mere definition and tentative programmes towards a much broader and committed approach to a people-centred United Nations.

It is in that spirit that the sustained efforts of the United Nations and the leading proponents of human security among its Members are to be commended — from the initial work of the Commission on Human Security to more recent activities during the past five years. The report of the Secretary-General (A/64/701), along with the panel discussion this morning on the added value of human security and the second seminar on human security and health, hosted by Japan, provide us of more proof of the noble intention behind this concept.

The complementary relationship between human security and national sovereignty and the distinction between human security and the responsibility to protect have been clearly explained and should lay to rest any doubt about whether or not the use of force is envisaged in the concept. A review of the history of the discourse on human security reveals its strengths in the area of responding to the real and immediate needs of people, outside the traditional multilateral understanding of the term "security".

The Philippines has had the honour in the past to serve as President of the Security Council. In my personal capacity as the current President of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), I am keenly aware of the sensitivities that Member States attach to the word "security". It therefore strikes me as no coincidence that, five years ago, the last NPT Review Conference was held just as the World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) came up with a commitment to discussing and defining the notion of human security — or that, five years later, we are back here in New York facing the urgent need to make progress beyond a sense of suspicion and distrust and to return to the ideals of the United Nations in seeking a better world for humankind.

We must therefore focus on the actual work that has been done on human security, rather than dwell on imagined fears. Our discussions in the Hall today reveal that the basic tenets of human security have been considered in the work of the United Nations since the mid-1990s, and that the more recent actual application of those concepts has been in the areas of vulnerability to natural calamities, health threats and man-made crises such as the global food, fuel, financial and economic crises, as well as in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the prevention of conflict.

The Secretary-General's report itself stresses, in paragraph 69, that "human security is a practical approach to the growing interdependence of vulnerabilities facing peoples and communities", and in paragraph 70 that

"the application of the human security concept does not bring additional layers to the work of the United Nations, but rather complements and focuses the activities of the Organization in these areas".

What that means is that the driving force behind human security is not new and that, in fact, the work of the United Nations has been based on the precepts underlying that notion all along.

One need only look at the list of countries that have benefited from the work of the Human Security Unit of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the projects supported by United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security. The Philippines itself has received support for five projects

from the Trust Fund. There are at least 74 other developing countries and countries in transition that are Trust Fund beneficiaries.

The most recent issue of the *Human Security Newsletter* focuses on the issue of trafficking in persons and quotes the Secretary-General's statement at the most recent Global Forum on Migration and Development, held in Greece, that the international community should devote special attention to the most vulnerable migrants of all — the victims of human trafficking, especially women and girls. That link between human security and migration was raised by the Philippine Mission here in New York last year at the seventh meeting of the Friends of Human Security. It was noted that several major stakeholders in the human security discussions were also major actors on the migration issue. That people-centred approach will almost certainly be a major theme at the fourth meeting of the Global Forum, which is to be hosted by Mexico this year.

Given those examples, it is quite clear that, while there have been some reservations among a number of United Nations Members as to the scope of human security, there has also been acceptance on the part of many Members of the validity and support already given to the issues covered by the concept. It would appear that what remains is for us to proceed on a clear programme of action.

In particular, with reference to the apprehensions voiced by some delegations this morning, it is apparent that more confidence-building measures need to be undertaken. A programme of action should be consciously developed and pursued, with more information-sharing with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. A programme of action could include the following elements.

First, the activities described in the *Human Security Newsletters* could be expanded to those countries that are not clear about the objectives and intentions of the concept of human security. Secondly, those that have already benefited from the Trust Fund could provide feedback to the General Assembly on the level of transparency and impartiality in the implementation of projects. Thirdly, a higher profile for the Human Security Unit is needed, with a clear explanation of how its activities tie in or are related to the broader work of United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme,

UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, among others.

It is the belief of the Philippines that, once the lack of clarity is resolved and reassurance given on the continued implementation of human security programmes and projects, this worthy endeavour will produce much more benefit.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are here at this meeting of the General Assembly to hold a debate on human security, and the report of the Secretary-General (A/64/701) makes it possible for us to do so. Before I discuss some of our thoughts on the issue, I would like to express our concern about procedures used to carry out human security activities that have not been mandated by any organ of the United Nations.

As we know, the concept of human security has not yet been accepted or defined by the States of this Organization. It is therefore worrisome that the decision was taken to establish a Human Security Unit within the structure of the Secretariat before agreement had even been reached on the term.

Our delegation has doubts and questions about the purpose of the concept. The scope proposed for its implementation is too broad and ambiguous. For instance, the aim is to merge under a single umbrella three fundamental pillars of the Organization — security, development and human rights — that are in differing spheres. We are concerned about the attempt to securitize — to use a somewhat strange term — the economic and social development agenda, whereby the use of force and the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States could be legitimized in cases in which certain powerful States may consider that the safety of the population in a given country is at risk. The consideration of this issue should adhere strictly to the fundamental purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and be addressed by the General Assembly.

Venezuela believes that the issue we are discussing should focus on the area of development. The welfare of human beings is ensured by the full exercise of their right to development and the primacy of human rights and democratic freedoms. It is up to sovereign States to determine which threats their peoples face and how they are to be addressed. States

have the obligation to provide care, support and protection for their peoples. They should implement humanist and solidarity-based policies that help to eradicate poverty and hunger. And they should build societies in which equality, justice and freedom reign.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is committed to ensuring the security, prosperity and welfare of all Venezuelans. That responsibility is exercised in full and without interference from foreign Powers seeking to impose their ideological paradigms. The report of the Secretary-General refers to new threats, but ignores the systemic and structural environment that explains the underlying causes that produce those threats and endanger the full development of human beings and the very existence of humankind. An abstract, and therefore ambiguous, definition of the term "human security" could well lead to its selective or even politicized use.

In addressing the threats facing the peoples of the world today, we call for attention to be paid to the systematic aggressions and interventions of foreign Powers, which destroy or threaten the survival of entire populations. Who protects those peoples from such threats? The insistence on questioning the ability of sovereign States to ensure the protection of their own peoples is worrying. Who should determine whether some States are unable to protect their populations? Who should design appropriate responses? In that regard, we caution that the notion of human security could be used to justify and carry out interventionist measures in countries that disagree with the dominant paradigms of capitalism and imperialism.

The world is home to a wide range of cultures and economic, political and social models. The current debate must therefore underscore that there is no single model of democracy and that no Power has the authority to impose its own doctrine on the world. The search for the welfare, progress and dignity of peoples must guide the necessary efforts at multilateralism. Those goals can be achieved with policies that respect the history, culture and cherished traditions with which all countries are endowed. For their part, States must be genuine expressions of the will and sovereignty of their peoples.

In that vein, our delegation is ready to contribute to the debate in the General Assembly. We extend a

hand to all those who in good faith strive to achieve the welfare and dignity of human beings around the world.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Almost exactly two years ago, the General Assembly held its first thematic debate on the issue of human security. That exchange made it very clear that Member States hold many and diverse opinions on how to define human security. This is a complex and sensitive issue on which we are still far from consensus.

It is therefore worrying to see the Secretariat adopt policies and take steps to implement a concept that has not yet been defined by Member States. Despite the fact that no consensus definition exists, the report of the Secretary-General (A/64/701) refers to no less than 20 structures of the United Nations system that have carried out human security projects since 1999. Cuba has no doubt as to the noble objectives of many of those projects. However, implementing ambiguous and vaguely defined concepts creates the conditions for its manipulation by certain States.

For Cuba, there is no higher priority than guaranteeing equal opportunity for all members of society to enjoy their rights and to fully develop their human potential. We are in no way calling on the international community or the United Nations to remain impassive before the numerous problems that affect the security and development of human beings. On the contrary, Cuba has always demanded and will continue to demand decisive and urgent action to address the root causes of such problems and to find just and lasting solutions to them.

Today, we face the enormous challenge posed by the current unjust, unequal and unsustainable international order. We live in a world that favours a minority that does not exceed 20 per cent of the population of the planet yet prevents the development and well-being of the remaining 80 per cent. How can the security of all human beings be guaranteed in the face of such obstacles as unequal trade, the hermetic closure of the markets of industrialized countries to our products, restrictions on the transfer of technology and the outrageous brain drain?

Unless the conditions of underdevelopment and poverty in which four fifths of humankind lives are eradicated; unless we lift 1.4 billion people from extreme poverty; unless we educate the nearly 800 million adults who cannot even read, then human security will be just an empty rhetorical phrase. How

can we talk about human security when, as pointed out in the report of the Secretary-General, 17,000 children die of hunger every day — which is to say, one every five seconds? How can we talk about human security when the Food and Agriculture Organization reports that the number of hungry people in the world has reached a record 1.02 billion people, or one out of every six?

Unless the United Nations and its development infrastructure is preserved; unless a new financial architecture with a social approach is established; unless the modest commitment to allocate 0.7 per cent of the developed world's gross national product to official development assistance is met; and unless external debt is cancelled, human insecurity will continue.

Not only will there be no human security, but the survival of humankind will be impossible if the unsustainable pattern of production and consumption of industrialized countries continues. That pattern pollutes and degrades the ecosystems of the planet, depletes natural resources and is responsible for most greenhouse gas emissions. Among other things, global warming, the danger of sea-level rise, the depletion of fossil fuels and the irrational use of water resources pose very serious threats to the security of human beings.

There can be no human security without sustainable development. There will be no human security so long as there is food and energy insecurity.

Human security is incompatible with the existence of more than 22,000 nuclear weapons, over 12,000 of which are ready for immediate use. There will be no human security so long as nuclear disarmament is not achieved and the world continues to spend considerably more on the production of weapons than on saving lives.

There will be no human security if selectivity, partiality and double standards on human rights do not cease; if economic, social and cultural rights are ignored; and if the right to development is not promoted as a priority.

With regard to Cuba, I cannot fail to mention that, apart from flagrantly violating international law, the brutal economic, commercial and financial blockade that has been imposed against our country for

over 50 years has cost Cuban lives and contradicts any concept of human security.

That is the reality of today's world. Our discussions cannot ignore it.

Cuba believes that a definition of human security that is acceptable to all States will necessarily have to meet at least the following basic premises.

First, it must ensure full respect for international law and the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs. The purposes and principles of the Charter cannot be rewritten, distorted, restricted or made conditional. The Charter constitutes the basis of collective security, and therefore of human security.

Secondly, we must totally rule out — explicitly and in all circumstances — the possibility use or threat of use force against States.

Thirdly, we must guarantee that the Government of every State be the only entity with the right to determine threats to human security that may exist in that State and to decide the most appropriate way to address them.

Fourthly, any foreign or external assistance or contribution to a State in relation to human security must be strictly conditioned upon the request and consent of the Government of the State in question.

Cuba will not accept a definition of human security that is not consistent with these four tenets. We will not support any concept that can be manipulated or that leaves an opening for those who seek to legitimize interventionism and unilateral actions.

To conclude, I would like to stress that the consideration of this issue should continue in the framework of the General Assembly, where we all have a voice and the right to vote and are on an equal footing, and where there is no place for hegemony. Cuba considers it essential that any decision on human security should be adopted by consensus. Otherwise, instead of bringing positions closer, we would be widening divisions on a matter that has important implications for all. In this process, there can be no impositions or unnecessary haste. On the contrary, a thorough and deep analysis that duly takes into account

the legitimate interests and concerns of all Member States should prevail.

Mr. Okuda (Japan): First of all, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, for his initiative of organizing this first formal debate on human security in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly. This important meeting builds upon the thematic debate on human security that was held in May 2008 to fulfil the commitment made by the heads of States and Governments in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) to discuss and define the notion of human security in the General Assembly.

Allow me also to express my Government's deep gratitude to the Secretary-General for his report (A/64/701), which presents a useful basis for this debate. The report provides us with a clear and holistic picture of the concept of human security by illustrating how the concept has been formulated and defined and by taking stock of the various initiatives undertaken by Governments, regional organizations and the United Nations system that show the concept's growing acceptance in recent years. This report is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to our efforts to forge a common understanding of human security among Member States.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the following three specific points addressed in the Secretary-General's report.

First, out of existing definitions of the concept of human security, the report extracts its essential components. In this respect, my delegation notes with great interest that the report states that "human security does not entail the use of force against the sovereignty of States" (A/64/701, para. 19).

Secondly, the report makes clear that human security and national sovereignty are not mutually contradictory concepts. On the contrary, according to the report, "the human security concept seeks to enhance the sovereignty of States" and "[i]mproved capacities of Governments and their institutions... are key components in advancing human security..." (*Ibid.*, para. 22). In my delegation's view, this concept is fully consistent with the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

I would like to recall here that the preamble of the Charter commences with the words "We the

peoples". The international community should therefore support the efforts made by Governments, in full respect of their national sovereignty and ownership, to create an environment that enables all individuals to fully develop their potential and livelihood.

Thirdly, the report makes a clear distinction between human security and the responsibility to protect (R2P), in line with the separate provisions contained in the World Summit Outcome, and analyzes the differences between the two concepts. The purpose of human security as agreed in paragraph 143 of the World Summit Outcome is to enable all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, to be free from fear and want, to enjoy all their rights and to fully develop their human potential. On the other hand, the purpose of R2P, as agreed in paragraphs 138 to 140 of the World Summit Outcome, is to protect populations from the four most serious types of human rights violations, namely, genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

As one of the pioneers in promoting the concept of human security, Japan appreciates the clear distinction made in the Secretary-General's report between human security and R2P. My delegation would like to remind all Member States to be mindful of the differences in scope of and means envisioned by the two concepts in future intergovernmental processes.

What, then, is the added value of human security? This question is asked very frequently. The report of Secretary-General articulates with eloquence how the concept of human security can be applied to different global issues that are already priorities of the United Nations. These cases include, inter alia, financial and economic crises, food security, threats to health, including infectious diseases, climate change and related natural hazards, and peacebuilding. The country-level aggregated approach does not suffice to effectively tackle these global issues, which are both broad and deeply interconnected.

The human security concept induces policymakers to keep a closer eye on individuals, households and communities and on their lives, livelihoods and dignity. It proposes people-centred, comprehensive, multisectoral and multi-stakeholder responses that enable the protection and empowerment of people and communities in need. Such a bottom-up perspective in policy formulation is, in our view, the

most significant added value of the concept of human security.

The concept of human security is being applied in policies and measures at the national and regional levels. Indeed, major regional and subregional organizations across the globe — including the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Organization of American States — have adopted this concept. Various United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme and UNESCO, not only adopt human security in their strategies, but also actively disseminate the concept in various countries and regions. Japan believes that the General Assembly should encourage the development of these initiatives in order to further mainstream and operationalize the concept at various levels, and in particular throughout the activities of the United Nations.

The critical nature of the role of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security cannot be underscored enough in view of its contribution to producing tangible results on the ground through the operational activities of United Nations agencies. Since its establishment in 1999, approximately 200 projects have been implemented in countries of all regions, with voluntary contributions from Japan, Thailand, Slovenia and Greece. Japan hopes that the Trust Fund's activities will be further enhanced through contributions from as many Member States as possible. Japan will continue to be engaged in operationalizing the concept of human security through its bilateral development assistance schemes, such as the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects and Grant Aid for Community Empowerment.

To follow up on the agreement set forth in the World Summit Outcome, Japan, as co-chair together with Mexico, has been organizing biannual meetings of the Friends of Human Security. As an open-ended forum for interested Member States and United Nations organizations, it has seen the participation of more than 140 Member States since its first meeting in October 2006. The main focus of our discussions has been on how to forge a common understanding of human security and how best to mainstream the concept in relevant United Nations activities. Participants concur that the human security approach is useful in addressing important global issues and pervasive

threats that are mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General. They also share the view that securing human security in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals is of vital importance.

The global threats people face change with time. In a sense, human security is an evolving concept because it seeks to cope with emerging pervasive threats to people. In our view, the General Assembly, where all Member States can participate and make a contribution, is the most appropriate forum for deliberating this cross-cutting concept. This first formal debate is truly an important milestone for discussing and defining human security.

If we are to carry out the commitment we made in the World Summit Outcome, my delegation believes that the discussions on human security should be conducted on a regular basis in the General Assembly plenary, and to this end requests the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on further developments pertaining to human security as an important input for a future debate in the Assembly.

Finally, my Government expresses its sincere appreciation to all the delegations participating in this meeting for their engagement and invaluable contribution to the debate on human security.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): First of all, let me express my delegation's appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting. The call by the heads of State and Government in paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) for States to commit themselves to the discussion on and definition of human security is an indicator of the growing international understanding of the importance of human security.

We take note with great appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General human security (A/64/701). The report correctly states that it is the primary function of Governments to ensure the well-being of their people. We are mindful that the elements reflected in the report — some global, others transnational, yet most national in scope — affect us all in some way or other. The ongoing impact of the financial crisis, questions about food security, high energy and food costs, scarce natural resources, adaptation to the effects of climate change and the impact of criminalized economies that are directly influenced by organized crime in vulnerable States — pose serious setbacks to

economic development, job creation and poverty eradication for humankind as a whole.

In turn, these setbacks have an equally negatively impact on the achievement of the targets set in the Millennium Development Goals. These challenges remind us that, first, as peoples we are not immune to the side effects of these issues, and that secondly, as Governments we must depend and rely on each other for assistance and cooperation in addressing these challenges, threats and vulnerabilities.

Naturally, South Africa fully appreciates the sentiments expressed in the Secretary-General's report with respect to incorporating elements that would seek to protect the most vulnerable and the poorest of the poor. Human security should address all current global insecurities in the economic, social and humanitarian spheres. The report points out the interrelationship among human development, human security and human rights in the pursuit of freedom from fear, freedom from want and the freedom to live in dignity. We believe that these freedoms cannot exist in isolation of each other. Therefore, as the report suggests, it is key to establish the causes and sources of human insecurity and work to address them effectively.

The African Union has placed the issue of human security at the centre of its overall policy framework for achieving lasting security and stability. Consequently, it is always through the prism of human security that the new continental organization endeavours to promote the holistic security of its peoples. By defining the concept of human security in the African Union Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact as

"the security of the individual in terms of satisfaction of his/her basic needs. It also includes the creation of social, economic, political, environmental and cultural conditions necessary for the survival and dignity of the individual, the protection of and respect for human rights, good governance and the guarantee for each individual of opportunities and choices for his/her full development",

African leaders underscored the need for the concept of human security to be dynamic and to encompass a broader notion of security.

We can only agree with the Secretary-General's report when it speaks about the need for human

security to be people-centred, and we add that it must have sustainable development at its core. The concept should therefore also include poverty eradication in the broadest sense and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, redress of underdevelopment, prevention of the increasing marginalization of many in the developing world as a result of the unequal benefits of globalization, and freedom from disease, especially prevention and eradication of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other infectious diseases.

The efforts of African leaders to broaden the concept of security and bring to it a human dimension can also be clearly seen in the governance architecture set up through the African Union. Institutions such as the Pan-African Parliament, the Peace and Security Council, the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the Economic and Social Council all emphasize the continent's commitment to human security. The establishment of these institutions shows the commitment of Africa's leaders to promoting human security and addressing current challenges facing the African continent. The successful achievement of these objectives is related to the achievement of peace, security, democracy and good political governance, respect for human rights and sound economic management.

Coordination and consolidation at the international and national levels are therefore necessary to promoting national ownership and to restoring the confidence of the people in their own governance systems. In fully realizing any added value that human security brings with its people-centred focus, we must ensure that appropriate synergies amongst the international donor community, the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations are in place to positively support national ownership, national legitimacy and national capacity-building. The various programmes and contributions of resources from the international community must be channelled to make them people-centred and locally driven through national capacities since, ultimately, such initiatives are driven by Governments or become Government undertakings.

The challenge for the United Nations system in effectively delivering on human security will essentially be to improve the Organization's coordination and coherence across the entire system. The United Nations should continue to move quickly to explore better ways to have a holistic impact on the

ground in our countries in order to improve the quality of life and enhance security and stability. Continued fragmentation and competition among various programmes and projects within the United Nations system will compromise the attainment of overall human security. The United Nations must deliver as one if it is to effectively pursue human security goals.

We must remain committed to the undertakings made by our leaders in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and hope that this discussion not only contributes to the further clarification and definition of human security, but also allows us to move progressively ahead in realizing it.

Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the initiative to convene today's thematic debate of the General Assembly to consider the question of human security. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on this important subject (A/64/701).

El Salvador welcomes the progress made to date in the implementation of paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), in which our heads of State and Government committed to examining and defining the concept of human security.

As the Secretary-General notes in the summary of his report, this concept

"is based on a fundamental understanding that Governments retain the primary role for ensuring the survival, livelihood and dignity of their citizens. It is an invaluable tool for assisting Governments in identifying critical and pervasive threats to the welfare of their people and the stability of their sovereignty".

In this context, we believe it important to understand that today the use of force is not sufficient to effectively confront these critical and pervasive threats to security. Instead, we need political, social and environmental systems, as well as a strengthening of the peacebuilding process. Together, these efforts should reduce the probability of conflicts and violence, overcome the obstacles to development and promote human freedoms for all.

As the Secretary-General indicates, "no country can enjoy development without security, security without development, and neither without respect for human rights" (A/64/701, para. 10). This triangular relationship heightens the recognition that poverty,

conflict and societal grievances can fuel a vicious cycle.

El Salvador, as a member of the Friends of Human Security, today joins other delegations in stressing the importance of mainstreaming the focus on human security across the United Nations system. From our perspective, the added value of this concept and cross-cutting focus lies in the emergence of human security as a response to current and emerging threats that are multiple, complex and interrelated and can acquire transnational dimensions, as we have seen. Similarly, the concept of human security, in our view, calls for an expanded understanding of traditional security in which the protection and empowerment of people form the very basis and purpose of security.

Human security has become one of the major concerns of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and constitutes a target obstacle for sustainable human development. Indeed, people and communities frequently find their real options for living and organizing themselves limited by threats to their personal and proprietary security and to essential public goods. For this reason, we stress our belief that the problem of civic insecurity can have a solution and that this solution is feasible.

However, a strategy based on human development undoubtedly requires action to provide effective security for all. That entails freedom, equality and respect for individual guarantees. In this respect, effective security involves the reduction of crime rates and of the risk of being a victim of crime. Security with freedom requires the protection of all citizens to lead to the absence of fear and the capacity of all citizens to fully develop their potential. Security with equality means universal protection for all citizens, not just for those who can pay for it.

It is also important to point out that the concept of human security recognizes that, in the face of certain unfortunate events, such as natural catastrophes or disasters, people may be confronted by insecurity and sudden privations that may not only set back years of development efforts, but also generate conditions of serious tension.

To conclude, allow me to reaffirm the political will of the Government of El Salvador to continue debating in the General Assembly the undoubted impact of the concept of human security so that we can overcome the challenges of the twenty-first century

and reinforce new paradigms that must, above all, contribute to placing the individual at the centre of the State's activities.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): Before I begin, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting on a topic of such broad relevance. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/64/701), which provides an excellent overview of the growing attention paid to this important issue by Member States and international and regional organizations. Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues at the Japanese Mission for the draft resolution they have submitted today, which Afghanistan is proud to co-sponsor. This meeting is a clear sign that the concept of human security is both increasingly relevant and increasingly recognized, and Afghanistan welcomes this trend and supports further discussion on this concept in the future.

The need for security in Afghanistan overshadows and underlies every effort undertaken by the Afghan Government and the international community to build a stable, secure and prosperous Afghanistan. The most immediate threat to security comes from ongoing terrorism and violence, in particular the murderous acts of the Taliban and Al-Qaida, which, through suicide bombs, assassinations and threats, create an atmosphere of fear and danger for the Afghan people and threaten the security of the region and the world.

However, while we must address this threat immediately, we have learned from experience that killing the enemy will not, in itself, provide security to the Afghan people. We must also break the cycle of violence and conflict born of 30 years of war, which has decimated the social, political and economic fabric of the country and resulted in environmental degradation, wrenching poverty, poor infrastructure and weak social structures. We must address the lack of governance, the rule of law and a stable justice system, and promote outreach to and the engagement of citizens with their Government. We must combat human rights abuses and promote the health and well-being of women, children and other disadvantaged groups. We must ensure that every Afghan has access to education, food, health care and gainful employment, and encourage investment in infrastructure and business. In addition, we must address such transnational issues as crime, narcotics trafficking and border control. We have learned to look

beyond military means to sustainable, long-term civilian efforts. We have learned to look beyond simple physical well-being to address the long-term economic, social and political security of the Afghan people.

The idea of human security admirably encompasses this broad range of needs and can guide us in our approach in Afghanistan. First and foremost, the concept stresses that people must be at the centre of our considerations. Our goals, as Governments, militaries and humanitarians, must be to locate and address the threats to the people of Afghanistan, and we should measure our successes by the changes we can bring to their lives. The military forces have already embraced this ideal in an effort to prevent civilian casualties and create sustainable progress. We need to ensure that this principle is also central to the development and humanitarian realms, making sure that every dollar spent in Afghanistan directly benefits the Afghan people.

Secondly, this idea recognizes the essential importance of development in the prevention of conflict and the promotion of security and stability. Desperation caused by poverty, unemployment and competition for resources and water is an obvious and enduring factor that exacerbates conflict and has spread a culture of violence in Afghanistan. The proposed civilian surge will offer Afghans a chance to live in peace and help them find a way to take care of their families without resorting to violence or illegal activities.

Thirdly, this concept addresses the need both to look for local, contextualized ways to repair the damage of conflict, including through peace processes, and to encourage regional cooperation to address the international aspects of the conflict. In Afghanistan, the awareness that military means cannot solve the conflict has led the Government to introduce reintegration and reconciliation programmes in the hope of repairing broken social structures and encouraging national unity, while engaging in intense regional dialogue to build trust and foster cooperation on these and other issues. Without the full engagement of the Afghan people, the Government and society can never hope to build a strong, independent nation, and without a constructive partnership with the region, Afghanistan's efforts will not be sustainable.

Fourthly and perhaps most importantly, human security looks to strong societies and strong institutions

as the core protection mechanisms against possible destabilizing factors. The recent strategy endorsed in London focuses on strengthening Afghan capacity through training, mentoring and resourcing so that Afghans can be invested in our common project and feel a sense of responsibility for its success. In addition, it emphasizes the importance of building a strong Government with stable institutions that is capable of representing its citizens and responding to their needs and concerns.

Human security is not a new concept. As Governments, our primary responsibility is and always has been to the well-being of our people above all else. However, with conflicts increasingly involving non-State actors, and transnational and recurring conflicts becoming more and more common, the international community must truly embrace the reality that conflicts have broad and varied causes and require comprehensive and contextualized responses. The concept of human security is essential to guiding domestic and international reactions to these emerging trends.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): At the outset, allow me to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting to discuss the concept of human security. As a member of the Friends of Human Security, our delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his immediate response to our request for a detailed and in-depth report on this critical issue of concern.

Now, five years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 60/1, this report on human security (A/64/701) is being considered on the eve of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It should be noted that the concept of human security contributes to our work to achieve the historic goals included in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the Millennium Development Goals. The close links between the MDGs and human security enhance the importance of ensuring security for every human being if those goals are to be reached.

Kazakhstan fully supports the interlinkage of social, economic, political, environmental and cultural prerequisites for the achievement of equal opportunities and rights, as well as the development of

human potential, an important component of creating sustainable human security.

Despite concerns put forward regarding possible or perceived interference in the internal sovereignty of States, it should be understood that the use of force is not envisaged in the application of the concept of human security. Moreover, early prevention policies designed to address societal issues are key components of promoting the concept of human security and maintaining a sustainable basis for the promotion of peace and conflict prevention. Kazakhstan fully supports the definition of human security as freedom from fear, including fear of weapons of mass destruction. With a view to achieving such a freedom from the nuclear threat, Kazakhstan has completely rejected nuclear weapons and removed them from our soil. This action contributed to establishing a more robust security architecture for the world.

Internal stability and inter-ethnic and inter-faith peace and harmony are also essential components of a democratic social structure and the peaceful development of civil society. The multi-ethnic and multi-confessional consent of Kazakh society has been identified as the main priorities of State policy to ensure a stable society. Kazakhstan, as the host country for the Congresses of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, offers a model of a society free from fear and want through respect for the cultures and religions of all people.

Our delegation commends the political initiatives of the Member States to promote the concept of human security at the regional and subregional levels and the building of a new human rights architecture. Kazakhstan proposes a review of field-based prospects for human security by the United Nations economic and social regional commissions, such as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific or the Economic Commission for Africa. Taking into account the significant efforts made to transition the concept of human security into a practical sphere, operational activities accompanied by funding and management issues should be addressed.

Over and above projects of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security that address long-term challenges, we are also concerned about the impact of climate-related emergencies on human security. The need for rapid responses to emergency conditions makes the mobility, adequacy and predictability of the

Trust Fund an important priority. As a member of the Friends of Human Security, my Government supports voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund. I also suggest giving new impetus to the Trust Fund for Human Security in order to revitalize traditional donors and innovative measures to attract voluntary contributions.

Kazakhstan highly appreciates the funding of projects in Central Asia, which accounts for the second largest funding level worldwide. My country also appreciates the activities of the Trust Fund for Human Security in the recovery process of the Semipalatinsk region by raising living standards through income generation, access to microcredit and the empowerment of the population.

During the peacebuilding process, human security can play a vital role in the protection and promotion of the human rights and freedoms. In such cases, Kazakhstan suggests that, in order to pay due attention to the concept, it be included as the cornerstone of resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and of outcome documents of the Security Council dealing with the impact of armed conflict on vulnerable groups such as women and children.

In conclusion, allow me express my country's hope for the fruitful mainstreaming of human security in the activities of United Nations Member States and for the successful application of the concept of human security in the United Nations agenda.

Mr. Barton (United States of America): The United States sees human security, which is based on dignity and empowerment, as a valuable framework for approaching global progress. Implementing human security means a people-first approach focusing on the well-being of people and protecting them from pervasive threats such as poverty, disease, conflict and hunger: threats that endanger civil society, governmental legitimacy and economic prosperity.

The concept of human security reflects the values of the United States. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in his 1941 state of the union address, brought forth the idea that security is founded upon every individual in the world being able to enjoy four essential human freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. President Obama echoed those sentiments in a speech on 20 November 2006 in which he stated that

"we must realize that the freedoms that [Franklin Roosevelt] once spoke of — especially freedom from want and freedom from fear ... are only realized once the personal and material security of a people is ensured as well".

We welcomed the release earlier this spring of the Secretary-General's report on human security (A/64/701), in which he indicated that protecting human security means protecting fundamental freedoms. Human security and national security are inextricably linked, with each supporting the realization of the other. For example, by creating governance structures and laws that protect human rights or by developing economic mechanisms which provide business opportunities, we are able to create security and support basic needs. When people are allowed to live freely and are empowered to achieve their full potential, it is not only the individuals who prosper, but their nations as well.

It is, of course, up to each individual nation to design and decide upon the appropriate mechanisms to protect the freedoms of its citizens and guarantee human security. In this way, we believe that the notion of human security should be considered in the light of the need to have national ownership of development initiatives.

The Secretary-General's report on human security is consistent with our belief that we must use a holistic approach, including in particular the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The United States has a strong desire to cooperate closely with other nations to create smarter, more effective strategies and governance structures that can prevail over threats to human security, address common challenges and achieve the MDGs in a sustainable way by 2015.

The United States would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for the opportunity to share our perspective on human security.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): Let me first of all join previous speakers in thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting to discuss the notion of human security. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the issue (A/64/701).

To date, a number of definitions have sought to capture the essence of human security, starting with a

broad one encompassing freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity. The report is singularly accurate in pointing out that there are a number of competing definitions of human security. On the one hand, this proves that the concept has garnered the attention of the international community. But on the other, it demonstrates that the international community is still struggling, after many years, to agree upon a single all encompassing formulation. That does not bode well for our efforts. The simmering debate about the concept of human security should not distract us from the heart of our work; rather, it should unite us further in achieving what the founders of the United Nations wished to realize.

The United Nations is a forum where States debate and argue on how to address the multiple challenges facing humanity. Poverty, the welfare of societies, pandemic diseases and the prevention of armed conflicts are some of the major issues that have to be addressed by the United Nations. The Charter, for that reason, founded various entities that are meant to bring nations together to ponder multiple solutions to our past, present and future challenges.

New concepts arise from time to time. Some have been well received; some unfortunately have to be redefined. The sprawling "securitization" of issues in the United Nations epitomizes this trend: there is a tendency to amplify old and new concepts by aligning them with security. We heard about health security, food security and human security. We fully understand that many issues are interlinked and interrelated; hence there is a need to bring them forward. However, the mark of a good concept is when it meets the test of time and addresses present and future challenges.

For Indonesia, the exact formulation of these sprawling issues is a secondary question. First and foremost, this is about the sustainability of our efforts ranging from providing basic health care to strengthening our law enforcement institutions. These multilayered efforts are intended to ensure that individuals and societies can achieve their most ardent dreams and hopes. That is the reason why States are created. States exist to open the door of opportunities and create a platform for their citizens to enjoy their basic rights and develop to their fullest potential.

That is the essence of human security, and that is the essence of the United Nations.

The Secretary-General has made a strong case regarding the operational side of the issue. The operational side of this issue is less about whether it falls under the framework of human security or not. It is about how the multiple United Nations entities that are funded through regular and voluntary contributions can make a difference at the operational level.

Operationalizing this human security can be achieved by having United Nations entities, within their respective mandates, work more efficiently and effectively in the delivery of their services.

Indonesia, like many others, stresses the basic principles enshrined in the Charter, which emphasize respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention. We adamantly support the maintenance of these principles, which hold countries together.

Governments retain the primary role for ensuring the survival, livelihood and dignity of their citizens. However, Governments are equally accountable to their citizens. States are bound to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms not only of their citizens, but also of those under their jurisdiction.

Finally, the report of the Secretary-General is indeed an important source for further deliberation. Let me assure the General Assembly of my delegation's readiness to take an active part in its constructive discussions of the notion of human security, in line with the consensus of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1).

Mr. Bui The Giang (Viet Nam): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening two days of plenary meetings and an informal panel discussion on human security as a follow-up to the commitment we collectively made at the 2005 World Summit. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/64/701.

While making intensive preparations for the Summit to be held in September to review the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), we all recognize the multidimensional, complex and interwoven threats that not only could hinder the accomplishment of the MDGs, but could also reverse hard-earned development progress in many parts of the world. According to the sixty-sixth session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, which concluded

only yesterday in Incheon, in the Republic of Korea, in Asia and the Pacific alone 11 countries may not meet the MDG on poverty reduction.

Apart from traditional threats to security, non-traditional ones — ranging from terrorism and multiple categories of transnational crime to natural disasters, epidemics, destitution and even economic and financial crises, to name but a few — have increased in both number and impact, rendering human lives more vulnerable and unsecured. Multidimensional, complex and interwoven in nature as they are, those non-traditional threats call for comprehensive responses that must be people-centred, context-specific and preventive. Against this backdrop, we welcome discussions on human security with a view to better understanding this concept, its relationship with non-traditional insecurities, possible responses to non-traditional insecurities, and the application of the human security concept in multilateral diplomacy, particularly through activities in the name of the United Nations.

As expressed more than once at this forum, my delegation totally shares the view that the State is to undertake the primary responsibility for ensuring the survival, livelihood and dignity of its individual citizens and communities, and that human security does not entail the use of force against the sovereignty of States, but rather focuses on fostering Government and local capacities and strengthening the resilience of both to emerging challenges.

Of course, in today's globalized world, where interdependence among nations has reached an unprecedented level, international cooperation, assistance and partnership are indispensable. Furthermore, such cooperation, assistance and partnership can be most effective only when and if they take into account specific social, economic, political, historical and cultural conditions, respect the ownership of local stakeholders, and comply with the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter.

In analysing the linkages between the human security concept and the different priorities of the United Nations as described in the Secretary-General's report, my delegation believes that our Organization's attention should be focused on hunger eradication, poverty alleviation and socio-economic development, for hunger, poverty and underdevelopment represent

the root causes of the many threats and challenges, traditional and non-traditional, that the international community is currently facing. This belief also comes from our understanding that these are the very areas in which the United Nations, with its vast and diverse experience and expertise, can make best contributions.

As a member of the Friends of Human Security, Viet Nam has proactively participated in the elaboration of the human security concept at the United Nations as well as in many regional and international discussions on the issue. More importantly, we have been doing our utmost to ensure the effective implementation of people-centred policies and strategies. This is because we have consistently considered the human factor to be the driving force for and ultimate goal of our national development. Our efforts over the years and subsequent encouraging results in implementing the MDGs, reducing poverty and improving both the material and the spiritual living standards of the population represent nothing but the practical application of the human security concept as we perceive it to strategy and policy priorities in our country-specific circumstances and conditions.

In the same vein, and fully aware of the importance of the international dimension, we look forward to greater cooperation, assistance and partnership from the international community, the United Nations system in particular, in dealing with the current and emerging threats and challenges Viet Nam is confronting, especially those posed by climate change, the spread of HIV/AIDS, and trafficking in persons. On our part, we are willing to join initiatives and contribute to endeavours along this line.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation participates with interest in today's discussion, which we believe should bring the international community closer to a common understanding of the concept of human security. This mandate derives from paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), in which we committed ourselves to discussing and defining the notion of human security in the General Assembly. Reaching a common agreed definition of that term is essential if we wish to further integrate the concept into the activities of the United Nations system. We are prepared to play an active and constructive role in the consultation process.

It was in the context of that challenge that we read the Secretary-General's report before the Assembly (A/64/701). We have drawn useful information from the report on what is being done to promote the concept, attempts to propose a definition for it, its links to State sovereignty and the responsibility to protect, and the national and regional initiatives that have been undertaken to that end.

The report recommends that we discuss how the concept of human security can be mainstreamed into the work of the United Nations. However, we feel that the focus of the report and our work should be not on jointly promoting a concept that has yet to be agreed, but on developing an understanding of human security. In that respect, the report unfortunately does not provide a comprehensive basis for taking substantive decisions at this stage. The attempt contained in the report to propose a definition of human security that has been referred to over a number of years in various contexts illustrates the absence of a single approach. Further, substantive and serious negotiations are needed, taking account of the views and positions of all Member States.

As part of this endeavour, we would like to offer a number of thoughts. First of all, a constant theme of the report is that we must revisit the paradigm of security and emphasize the security of the individual. But it does not address important issues such as national defence and State security. We agree with the report's understanding that Governments retain the primary role in ensuring the survival, livelihood and dignity of their citizens. That is precisely why, in our view, ensuring State security — to which the report, unfortunately, makes no reference whatsoever — is so important. Surely, human security can be guaranteed only within a secure State.

Secondly, we are pleased to note that one purpose of the concept is to enhance State sovereignty. But we must observe that the concept is being promoted also in the absence of strong and stable institutions capable of deploying targeted responses to eliminate causes of weakness, thereby building the capacity of Governments and individuals. Indeed, implementing the report's recommendations for carrying out such measures at the regional and subregional levels to address issues of social and economic development could lead to interference in internal affairs and violations of State security. Likewise, it is not clear who would define the threat level justifying such

measures, or how this would be done and according to what criteria.

We view positively the report's repeated references to the idea that human security does not entail the use of force against the sovereignty of States. This concept must be clearly distinguished from that of the responsibility to protect, which requires extremely clear wording with no room for ambiguity.

Thirdly, section E, on prevention of violent conflicts, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, is not particularly convincing. While stressing "protection and empowerment" (A/64/701, para. 51) of people, we must not lose sight of the core principle of peacebuilding activities: that countries bear responsibility for defining and pursuing their own priorities.

Fourthly, we welcome the attention the report pays to human rights standards. The emphasis on economic and social rights is, of course, important in the context of the current financial and economic crisis. But a number of other factors are absent, such as religious beliefs, traditional values and the rights and interests of the individual, and others are viewed with no reference to the interests of the society in which an individual lives. The whole issue of the individual's responsibility to society is totally ignored.

Fifthly, it is not entirely clear to us what contribution the concept of human security makes to addressing current economic, climatic and food problems. We are concerned that promotion of the concept could lead to duplication of international efforts in those spheres and could have a negative impact on global systems intended to respond to such threats. It is therefore important to carefully determine the added value of these elements of the concept.

As we understand it, the concept of human security can become an effective tool for attaining the goals of international cooperation only if its definition clearly states that its main purpose is to ensure harmonized development of human capacity in the social and economic sphere. And the concept can be put to use only if it is fully in line with the provisions of the Charter. Activities under the banner of human security must not duplicate or replace work already being done by the United Nations; nor must they impinge on the prerogatives of the relevant United Nations organs and agencies, including the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Human

Rights Council, the Commission on Social Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Russia is ready, on the basis of what I have just outlined, to continue to actively discuss this concept in order to arrive at a definition of human security.

Mr. Patriota (Brazil): Let me first highlight some important aspects dealt with by the Secretary-General in his report (A/64/701): first, the lofty ideal of protecting vulnerable individuals and their communities and promoting their well-being; secondly, the focus on cooperation as a tool for achieving this idea; thirdly, the recognition of the complex nature of challenges to the security and well-being of mankind, and therefore the need for multidimensional responses to these challenges; and fourthly, the importance of social participation and the involvement of local actors in finding solutions to their problems.

As surely as we recognize the need not to intervene in domestic affairs of another State, our collective consciousness entails a stance of non-indifference regarding the suffering of any human being, no matter where he or she is. Emphasis should be placed, however, on the primary role of the State in ensuring human security. This debate, with its focus on the individual and on local communities, cannot disregard the role of the State in promoting policies for the well-being of its own population.

Paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) spells out an agreement to discuss and define human security in the General Assembly. That agreement passes over the fact that the United Nations membership has never actually achieved a common understanding of what human security actually means and the question of whether it has the potential to become a useful or functional notion in addressing issues of concern to the international community.

The report of the Secretary-General, for which we are thankful, recognizes that definitions of human security are various and diverse, which is another way of expressing the lack of a shared understanding of the term. The 2005 World Summit Outcome was careful not to mix human security with the more complex and sensitive issue of the responsibility to protect, referenced in the document by means of the carefully crafted paragraphs 138 and 139. As far as the 2005

World Summit Outcome text is concerned, the two issues are formally unrelated.

Human security seems to encompass many different things at the same time, from climate change to pandemics to protection of children to violence against women to trade in small arms and light weapons. As a tool for addressing everything, it may in practice achieve very little.

The report lacks objectivity in the treatment of these challenges. The fact that human security can be applied in so many different contexts, not all of them necessarily interrelated, is testament to its limitations as a theoretical tool. We are left with a proposal that seems, first and foremost, a moral call in defence of the human being. It has, therefore, limited usefulness for the achievement of integrated and multidimensional solutions, despite its undisputed moral value.

Many if not all individual areas of concern to human security mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General already constitute well recognized priorities of the United Nations system, be they the protection of human rights, social and economic development, conflict resolution, peace, security, reduction of poverty, gender issues, legal empowerment, et cetera. Many of these questions have been the object of extensive multilateral decision-making and fit into specific and accomplished frameworks. Adding a human security layer to those existing frameworks does not seem, at first glance, to provide added value. In fact, disruption and confusion could very well be the result.

It is not particularly reassuring to read that the concept of human security implies an "expanded paradigm of security" (A/64/701, para. 9). If the intention is to bring the welfare of human beings to the fore, we should definitively steer away from linkages with security, and rather move towards the realm of humanism, social inclusion and solidarity, in particular with those in the most vulnerable positions. These are values the Government of Brazil abides by and the universality of which it would be happy to promote and support.

Our recognition of the links between human development and security should not reinforce a negative trend of indiscriminate use of force and recourse to Chapter VII of the Charter as a means of dealing with world affairs, to the detriment of cooperation and global solidarity.

In particular cases currently faced by the international community, where the lives of civilians have been put at risk and the notion of collateral damage has been applied in justification, how useful in practice would the concept of human security be as a means of improving the living conditions of those affected and holding perpetrators to account? Perhaps the answer to this question might shed some light on the effectiveness of human security as a workable concept in practice.

The Secretary-General's report asserts that "today's global flow of goods, finance and people increase[s] the risks and uncertainties confronting the international community" (*para. 10*). This seems to be a recognition that globalization can be as much a positive as a negative force for the promotion of human well-being. Instead of addressing the root causes of global instabilities, unbalances and asymmetries that reduce the margins for increased human welfare in the less developed corners of the world, the concept of human security would rather be looking to respond to the ex post impacts of global crisis, at the micro and local levels. This is not the preventive approach to be favoured.

In fact, if we want to be serious about putting humans first, we should muster our efforts in the reform of the international economic, trade and financial systems and regimes so as to increase the voice and representation of countries most in need, in order to design a world system more supportive of their development prospects. We should not limit our ambitions to the objective of merely "[coping] with current and future crises" (*para. 36*), or simply "[helping] address the social and human impacts of the crisis" (*Ibid.*) or indeed to taking note of economic unilateralism as a fact of life, of which the world's less fortunate and most vulnerable are the helpless victims. We should seek to understand why is it that

"basic lifesaving treatments are still not available to large segments of the population, leading to significant levels of lost productivity and unacceptable rates of preventable death". (*para. 42*)

We should address the root casus of that reality. The concept of human security cannot be a vague instrument intended to take care of the plight of humans as if it were the expression of a self-correcting invisible hand.

We will be able to recognize value in the notion of human security when we succeed in establishing clear limits and, therefore, clear meaning. Above all, it should be construed as a notion with practical relevance that does not overlap with or replace other important notions and instruments at our disposal.

Mrs. Horváth Fekszí (Hungary): The Republic of Hungary fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

Hungary would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this thematic debate on human security, as well as the Government of Japan for its efforts to tirelessly promote that concept. We welcome the Secretary-General's report (A/64/701), which provides a comprehensive study on the concept of human security and promotes awareness of the issue.

Hungary believes that the Secretary-General's report constitutes a valuable contribution to reaching a common understanding of the concept of human security, a new and comprehensive approach to the security of individuals that connects security with human rights and development.

Besides the universal, people-centred and interdependent character of the concept of human security, early prevention is also an important part of the concept. Bearing in mind the clear distinction between the concept of human security and the principle of the responsibility to protect, as outlined in the report, it is clear that in countries where genocide, ethnic cleansing or other war crimes are taking place, an area of freedom from fear and freedom from want simply cannot exist.

As an institution-building effort in the field of the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities, Hungary prepared last year a feasibility study on the potential establishment of a Budapest centre for the international prevention of genocide and mass atrocities. It is our belief that such an institution could encourage worldwide cooperative efforts in the forthcoming years to establish a well-functioning system for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities, through a dynamic and systematic approach of early action mechanisms. We consequently believe that this could effectively contribute to the promotion of the concept of human security from the point of view of early prevention.

Hungary agrees that the concept of human security, founded on the promotion of human rights, which are the prerequisites to ensure a broader and people-centred concept of security, could become an important tool in tackling the multiple crises and interconnected challenges our world currently faces. We support the recommendations of the present report and believe that periodic reporting on the progress in mainstreaming human security in United Nations activities will help in further developing this complex concept.

Mr. Srivali (Thailand): First and foremost, my delegation would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening this formal meeting and for organizing the thought-provoking informal panel discussion this morning on "People-centred approaches: The added value of human security", which offered valuable insights on the application and utility of the human security concept in many different countries.

As a member of the Friends of Human Security and of the Human Security Network, Thailand warmly welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on human security (A/64/701). It is a timely and relevant submission, as well as an important contribution to the discourse on human security here at the United Nations, identifying, among other things, major human security developments and initiatives worldwide.

There is no single definition of human security. Yet despite that, the concept has not only garnered increased attention, but also gained significant momentum all over the world. Here at the United Nations, we place importance, as we should, on defining concepts, and we have spared no effort in trying to clear a well defined space for human security. Yet around the world, this concept has already taken root in a common and growing understanding that human security is a people-centred, holistic approach that has utility in our world of interrelated and complex threats which often have blurred boundaries and require complex and coordinated responses.

As noted in the Secretary-General's report, Thailand was the first country to establish a ministry

dedicated to human security and social development. For Thailand, the concept of human security relates very closely to human development and our national socio-economic development agenda. As a developing country, Thailand places more importance on freedom from want than on freedom from fear, although we emphasize that any discussion of human security should take into account a balance between the two, allowing our people, in the end, to live in dignity.

But perhaps the definitive understanding of human security, for Thailand, is that in all our efforts to develop sustainably, the human being must be at the centre of policy-making. This should not be taken to mean that the concept of human security excludes State security or State roles, but rather that it incorporates all of these in a holistic approach in order to focus, or refocus, on the individual, recognizing that the individual can contribute enormously to the development of the country.

The human security approach, in Thailand's experience, is clearly evident in our efforts and in the formulation of our policies combating threats such as transnational crime, in particular trafficking in persons, and the problem of narcotic drugs. In the realm of health as well, our human-security-oriented policies are evident in our efforts to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS, in our dealing with various pandemics in our region and in our efforts to promote universal access to health care and medicine. In all these dealings, we have placed the human being squarely at the centre of the equation, which we view as the most effective manner of reaching sustainable solutions and meaningful impact and the most logical approach in our aspiration to protect, secure and develop the full potential of human beings.

Thailand is proud to be part of the growing family of supporters of human security, and we aspire to learn from all countries how they view the concept — its utility as well as its limitations — to contribute, in an important manner, to a common understanding of a concept and approach that has proven useful for a growing number of countries.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.